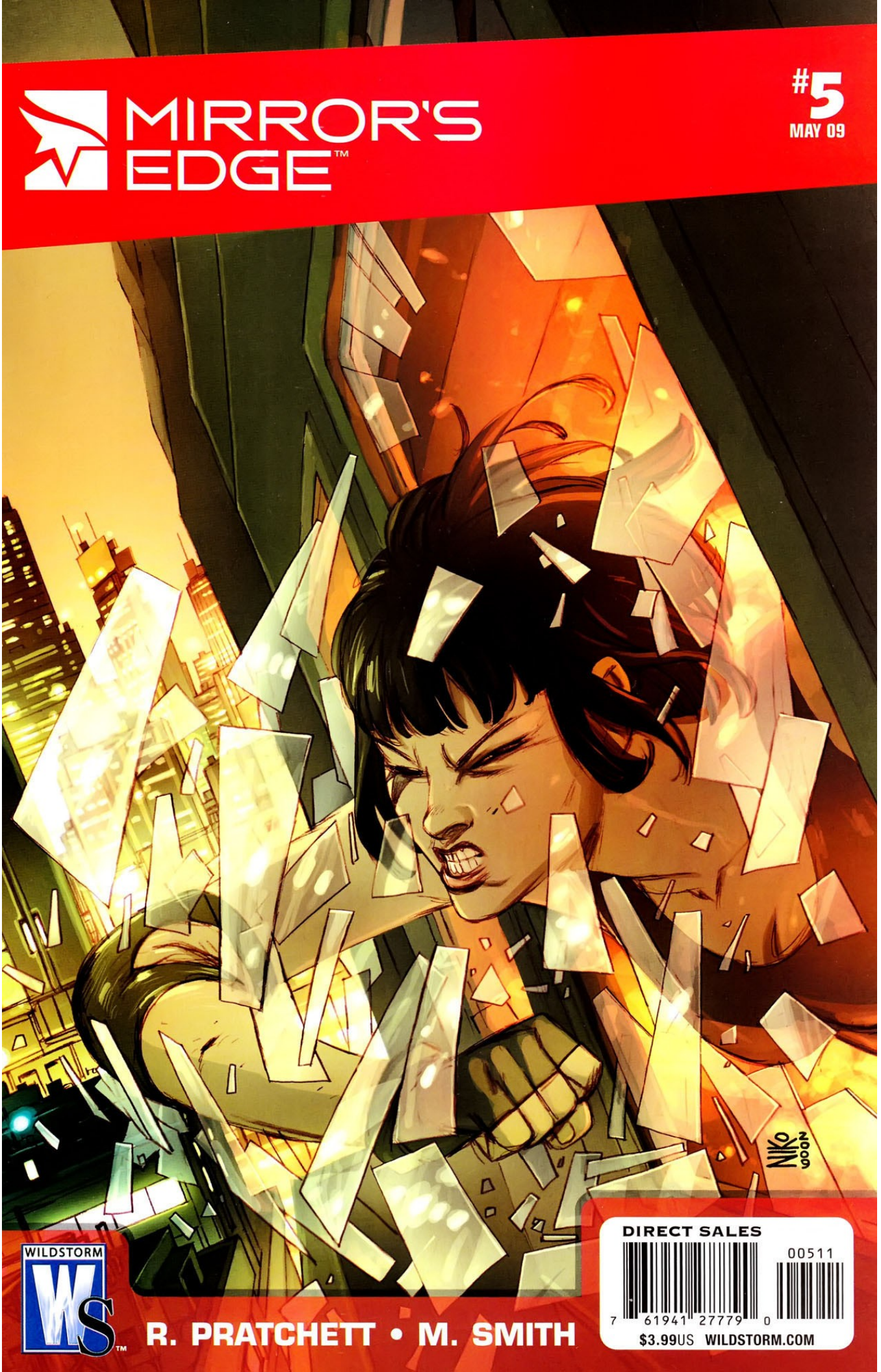
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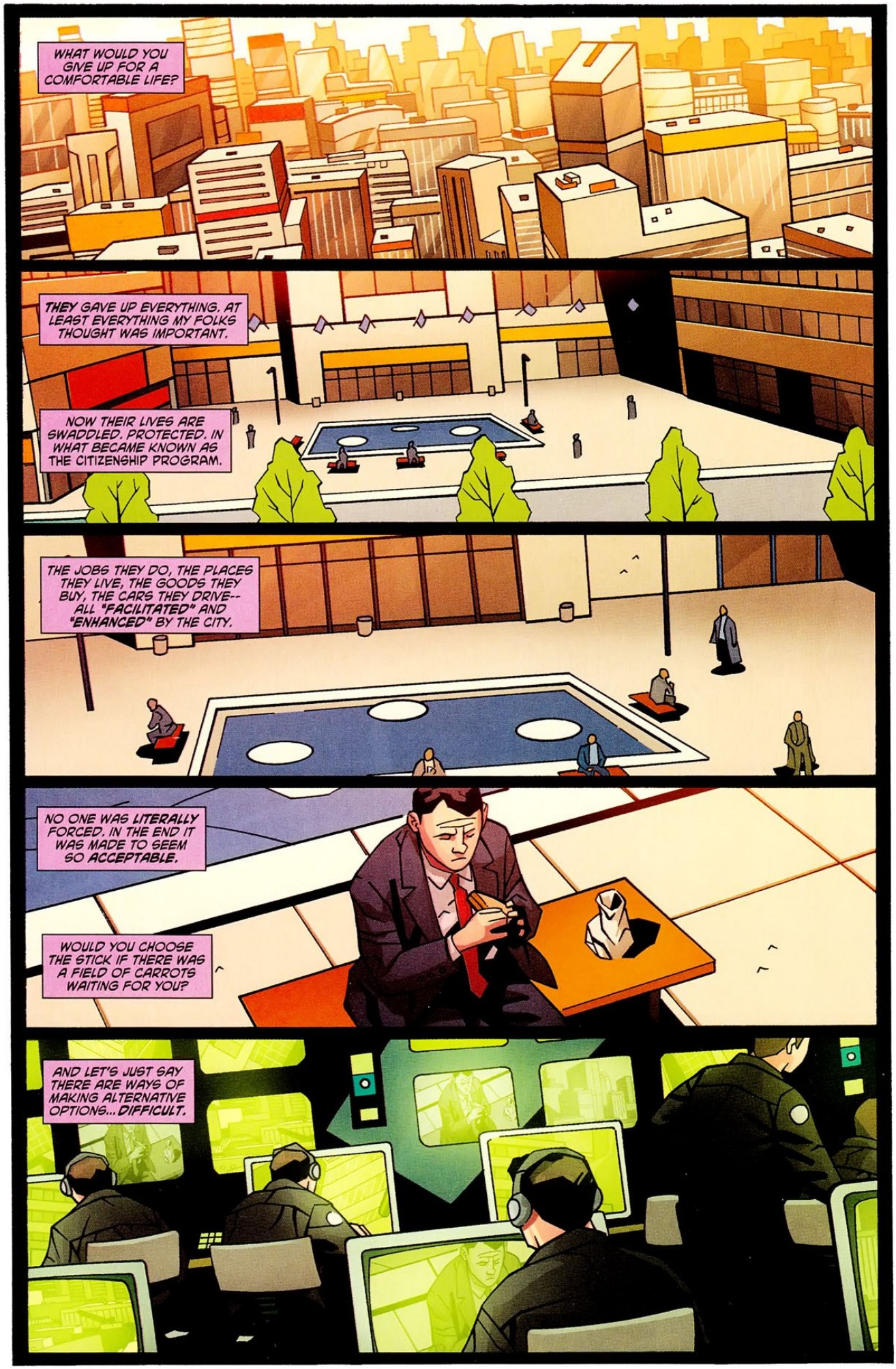

WHAT WOULD YOU GIVE UP FOR A COMFORTABLE LIFE?
THEY GAVE UP EVERYTHING. AT LEAST EVERYTHING MY FOLKS THOUGHT WAS IMPORTANT.
NOW THEIR LIVES ARE SWADDLED, PROTECTED. IN WHAT BECAME KNOWN AS THE CITIZENSHIP PROGRAM.
THE JOBS THEY DO, THE PLACES THEY LIVE, THE GOODS THEY BUY, THE CARS THEY DRIVE-- ALL "FACILITATED" AND "ENHANCED" BY THE CITY.
NO ONE WAS LITERALLY FORCED. IN THE END IT WAS MADE TO SEEM SO ACCEPTABLE.
WOULD YOU CHOOSE THE STICK IF THERE WAS A FIELD OF CARROTS WAITING FOR YOU?
AND LET'S JUST SAY THERE ARE WAYS OF MAKING ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS... DIFFICULT.

AND THEN THERE'S US.
WE DON'T EXACTLY FIT IN.
ANYWHERE.

RHIANNA PRATCHETT-writer • MATTHEW DOW SMITH-penciller

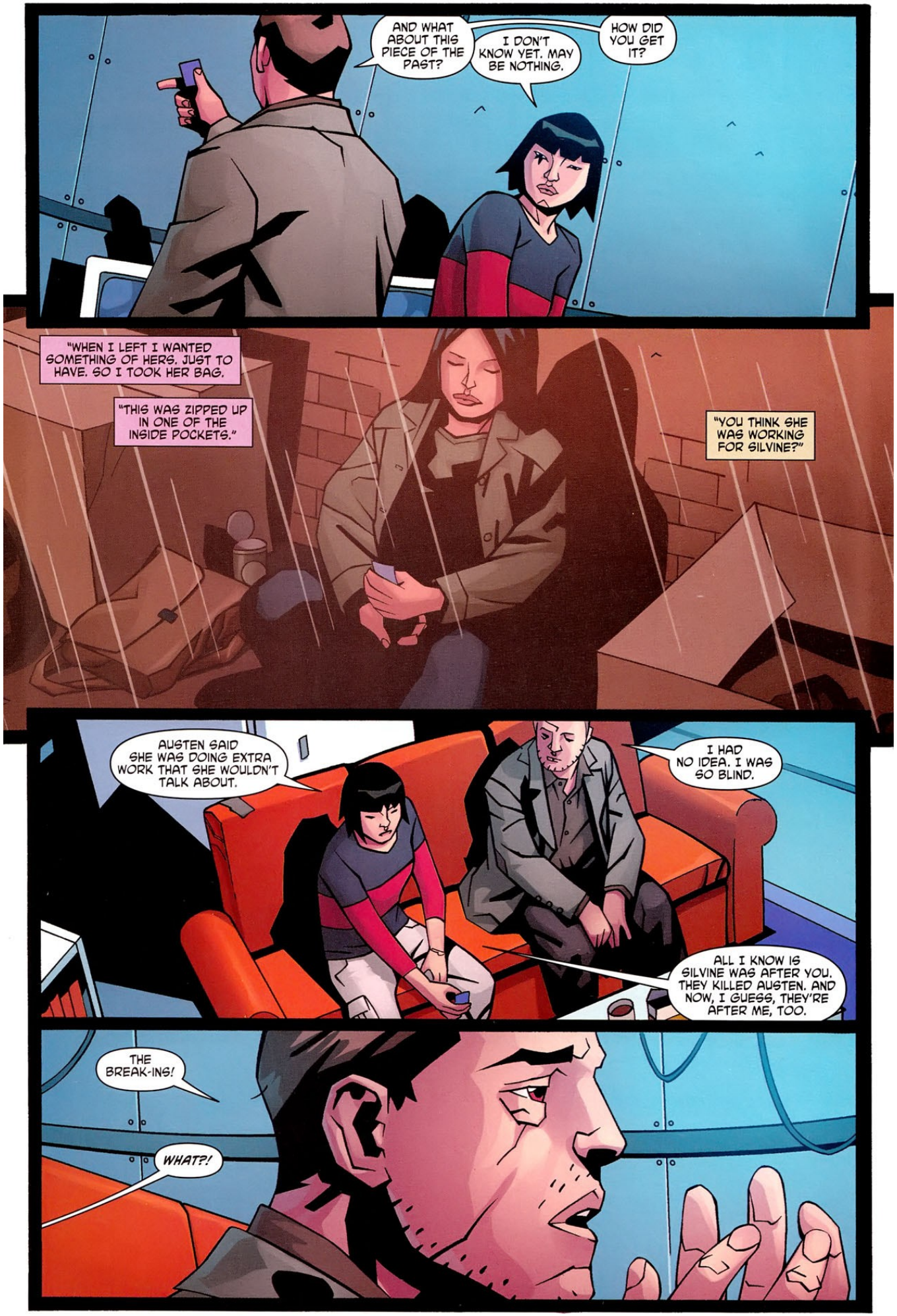
JON BOLERJACK inker | JIM CHARALAMPIDIS colorist | ROB LEIGH letterer | NIKO HENRICHON cover | KRISTY QUINN asst. editor | SCOTT PETERSON editor

YOU STOOD UP THERE, DR. CONNORS. YOU FOUGHT THE CITY. YOU FOUGHT THE CITIZENSHIP PROGRAM.
AND LOOK WHERE IT GOT ME. I DOUBT THERE ARE MANY WHO EVEN REMEMBER LIBERTAS.
SURE THEY DO. EVEN IF IT'S JUST AT THE BACK OF THEIR MINDS. LEAST, UNTIL THE CITY FINDS A WAY TO MONITOR THOSE!
YOU BEING THERE? THAT WAS IMPORTANT, ABE. AND ONE DAY IT WILL BE AGAIN.
YOU ARE A MORE HOPEFUL MAN THAN I, MERCURY.
HATE TO BREAK UP THE REMINISCENCE, MERC, BUT I NEED TO SPEAK TO DAD ALONE. FAMILY STUFF.
SURE. I COULD DO WITH A RUN ANYWAY.
CAREFUL YOU DON'T STRAIN SOMETHING.
YEAH, YEAH.

HOW ARE YOU, DAD?
"AUSTEN WAS GOING TO KILL ME BECAUSE OF WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR MOTHER.
"THEN THEY CAME... OH, GOD.
"AND THEY SHOT HIM... AND NOW I JUST KEEP SEEING HIS FACE.
AND I JUST LEFT HIM THERE.
I HAD TO GET YOU AWAY. MORE WOULD HAVE COME. THEY WERE AFTER ALL OF US.
BUT *WHY?*

LOOK... DOES THIS MEAN ANYTHING TO YOU?
THAT LOOKS LIKE THE SILVINE SECURITY SYSTEMS LOGO.
ASIDE FROM THAT? NO. I COULDN'T TELL YOU ANYTHING ELSE. THE PERSON WHO COULD'VE IS...
MOM...
YES.
IT BELONGED TO HER.
WHAT?
IT WAS IN HER BAG. THE ONE I TOOK WHEN I LEFT HOME.
NO. YOU'RE WRONG, FAITH. WHY WOULD ERIKA HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH SILVINE?
THE SECURITY TECH THEY PRODUCED... STILL PRODUCE... IT WAS EVERYTHING LIBERTAS STOOD AGAINST!
GUESS MOM WAS HIDING MORE THAN HER AFFAIR WITH AUSTEN.
DID YOU KNOW OUR FAMILY WAS IN DEBT?
YES. WELL, I... I KNEW THINGS WERE BAD.
AND WHAT DID YOU DO ABOUT IT? NOTHING! ALL YOU CARED ABOUT WAS LIBERTAS!

YOU'RE RIGHT, FAITH. I WAS NEVER MUCH OF A HUSBAND.
OR FATHER.
NO.
"THAT'S WHY YOU LEFT, ISN'T IT?"
"I JUST NEEDED SOME TIME.
"BESIDES, DIDN'T SEEM MUCH LEFT FOR ME AFTER SHE DIED.
"KATE WAS ALWAYS *YOUR* FAVORITE."
"THERE WERE DAYS I WAS GLAD I ONLY HAD ONE FACE TO LOOK AT AND REMEMBER HER, AND NOT TWO.
"I NEVER WANTED TO PUSH YOU AWAY, BUT I UNDERSTAND WHY YOU LEFT.
"I JUST DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY YOU CAME BACK."
I DON'T KNOW.
"WHEN I SAW THOSE PHOTOGRAPHS AND I KNEW YOU WERE IN DANGER...
"...I GUESS I FIGURED *NOT MUCH* OF A FATHER IS BETTER THAN *NONE.*"


AND WHAT ABOUT THIS PIECE OF THE PAST?
I DON'T KNOW YET. MAY BE NOTHING.
HOW DID YOU GET IT?
"WHEN I LEFT I WANTED SOMETHING OF HERS. JUST TO HAVE. SO I TOOK HER BAG.
"THIS WAS ZIPPED UP IN ONE OF THE INSIDE POCKETS."
"YOU THINK SHE WAS WORKING FOR SILVINE?"
AUSTEN SAID SHE WAS DOING EXTRA WORK THAT SHE WOULDN'T TALK ABOUT.
I HAD NO IDEA. I WAS SO BLIND.
ALL I KNOW IS SILVINE WAS AFTER YOU. THEY KILLED AUSTEN. AND NOW, I GUESS, THEY'RE AFTER ME, TOO.
THE BREAK-INS!
WHAT?!

WE HAD SEVERAL. LAST YEAR. AT FIRST I...
YES?
...I THOUGHT IT WAS YOU.
"WHY?"
"BECAUSE THEY WERE ALL FOCUSED ON YOUR MOM'S WORKROOM.
"I KNEW YOU FELT CLOSEST TO HER THERE. I THOUGHT YOU'D COME BACK. GOT ANGRY, MAYBE."
WAS MUCH TAKEN?
NO. JUST MESSED UP. LIKE THEY WERE LOOKING FOR SOMETHING.
FROM WHAT YOU SAY, THIS IT WAS THE ONLY PIECE OF HER WORK THAT WASN'T THERE.
"I HAVE TO FIND WHAT'S SO IMPORTANT ABOUT THIS PIECE.
"DRAKE'S BEEN RUNNING SOME TESTS. BUT EVEN HE'S NOT SURE.
I HAVE TO GO HOME.

AND THAT'S HOW I ENDED UP HERE.
FUTURE HOME OF
New Eden
ESTATES
POLI
AND WHY SHE ENDED UP HERE, TOO.
CAUTION
KATE, MY SISTER.

IT SEEMS I WASN'T THE ONLY ONE WHO LEFT HOME.
THE BURGLARIES REALLY SPOOKED DAD. HE WAS WORRIED THAT HE AND KATE WERE IN DANGER.
HE SENT KATE TO LIVE WITH AN AUNT IN NEW CITY.
HE SOLD WHAT HE COULD.
AND VANISHED INTO OLD TOWN.
AFTER A WHILE, HE PUT THE HOUSE UP FOR SALE IN KATE'S NAME.
FOR SALE

AND GRADUALLY THE SHINING WAVE OF NEW CITY STARTED TO COVER THIS PLACE.
FUTURE HOME OF
New Eden
AND THESE, THE NEW EDEN ESTATES, ARE RIDING HIGH ON THAT WAVE.
THEY'RE PLACES WHERE THE NEW CITIERS CAN CLOSE THEMSELVES AWAY FROM THE PAST. FROM OLD TOWN.
FROM UNWELCOME GUESTS.
MOST OF THE TIME.

YOU HAVE TO STAY BACK, HONEY. IT'S DANGEROUS.
BUT I WANNA SEE THE BOOM!
YOU WILL. SOON.
I *HAVE* TO GET IN THERE, MERC.
HOW DID YOU *NOT KNOW* IT WAS DUE FOR DEMOLITION? WHY DON'T YOU ASK OLD MERC A FEW QUESTIONS ONCE IN A WHILE?
Hmm.
WELL, I GUESS "HEY, MERC, DO YOU THINK MY CHILDHOOD HOME IS DUE TO BE BLOWN TO PIECES?" NEVER EVEN CROSSED MY MIND.
0:17:39
NOT MUCH TIME.

I'VE GOT ABOUT 18 MINUTES.
SET UP A CLOCK, PLEASE, MERC.
OKAY. BUT YOU'RE NO GOOD TO ME IN BITS, KIDDO. I GOT SOME OF MY BEST RUNNER TRAINING INVESTED IN YOU.
HEY! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
GET OFF THAT!
WHAT THE HELL'S SHE DOING?

FUTUR

NEVER THOUGHT I'D BE HERE AGAIN.
WELL, DON'T GET TOO SENTIMENTAL. IT WON'T BE THERE FOR MUCH LONGER.
THIS WHOLE PLACE, MERC. IT'S JUST WAITING TO DIE.
AIN'T WE ALL?
YOU FOUND YOUR HOUSE YET?
YEAH. THIS IS IT.

HOW YOU GONNA GET IN? DRAKE SAID THEY'VE BOARDED UP THE ENTIRE ESTATE.
SAME WAY I GOT OUT.
YOU GOT ABOUT 12 MINUTES NOW.

EIGHT MINUTES, FAITH.
DAMMIT, MERC-- WHAT DID I THINK I WAS GOING TO FIND HERE? I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT I'M LOOKING FOR!
HELLO, EDDIE. AT LEAST I'VE FOUND YOU AGAIN.
YOU GOT A GUY IN THERE?
FIRST LOVE. MOM MADE HIM FOR ME.
Huh?
FAITH!

KATE?! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
GUYS SAID THEY SAW A CRAZY GIRL JUMP OFF A CRANE AND RUN IN HERE.
I FIGURED IT WAS YOU.
ESPECIALLY WHEN I SAW SOMEONE HAD BUSTED IN OUR OLD WINDOW.
WE'VE GOT TO GO. THE TIMERS ARE AUTOMATIC-- THEY CAN'T BE STOPPED.
NOT UNTIL I'VE FOUND OUT WHAT THIS UNLOCKS. IT WAS ON EDDIE.
THIS IS NO TIME TO START PLAYING WITH TOYS-- WE'VE ONLY GOT SIX MINUTES.
FAITH! COME ON!
YOU SAID SIX MINUTES!
IT'S THE CHARGES ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE ESTATE GOING OFF. THEY'RE TIMED SEQUENTIALLY.
BA-WHOOM
SHE'S RIGHT. YOU'VE GOT SIX MINUTES UNTIL IT REACHES YOU.
BOOOM
HANG ON. HEARD SOMETHING.

MY GOD...
THAT'S MOM'S HANDWRITING.
I'M SORRY
FAITH. WE WERE BORN HERE--AND I REALLY DON'T WANT US TO DIE HERE.
LET'S GO.

BA-WHOOM
THREE MINUTES, FAITH!
TWO...
ONE...